



Co-Chair Eileen Daily
Co-Chair Cameron Staples
Senator Andrew Roraback
Representative Vincent Candelora

Members of Finance Committee:

I am submitting testimony in **opposition to S.B. 930, AN ACT CONCERNING THE CIGARETTE TAX, THE TOBACCO PRODUCTS TAX AND THE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES TAX**, as it pertains to cigarettes.

The Independent Connecticut Petroleum Association (ICPA) represents 550 petroleum marketers and their associated business in Connecticut. ICPA members employ over 13,000 people in our state and provide our fellow citizens with gasoline and heating oil.

The proposed increase in the cigarette tax comes on the heels of two increases that we have experienced over the last few years, with the most recent increase by the state coming in 2007.

The past increases in the cigarette tax have resulted in reduced sales, hurting tax revenue and the profits of small convenience store owners. Sadly, past increases have resulted in lost sales to other states and online purchases of cigarettes.

Increasing the cigarette tax, in addition to the highest gasoline tax in the Northeast, the state taxing policies continue to drive consumers away from our local convenience stores. Unlike other businesses, we can not move from Connecticut to avoid unfavorable taxes.

While local family owned convenience stores struggle to survive, this is the worst economic time that the state could be dealing such a devastating blow to convenience store operators.

High gasoline taxes, increasing cigarette taxes and a proposed 20% cut in lottery commissions all equal an economic environment that is conducive to a reduction of the local convenience store.

I ask that the Finance Committee **oppose S.B. 930, AN ACT CONCERNING THE CIGARETTE TAX, THE TOBACCO PRODUCTS TAX AND THE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES TAX**, as it pertains to cigarettes.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christian A. Herb".

Christian A. Herb
Associate Director